



MODERN NATURE DESIGN

Silk vs. Tencel vs. Viscose

Silk, Tencel and viscose fibers create a luxurious lustrous shine in rugs. Silk, Tencel and viscose look identical. So, what are the differences and which is best for your rug(s)?

Pure Natural Silk

We use only the finest silk in the world for our rugs. Silk is a natural, heirloom quality fiber that is an extremely durable and cleanable. Real silk is extremely high in tensile strength and colored silk will never fade. Like wool, good quality silk can be washed over and over to look new again, even after decades or even centuries of use. There are many silk rugs in great condition that are hundreds of years old! The only disadvantage of silk is the price.

TENCEL vs. Viscose

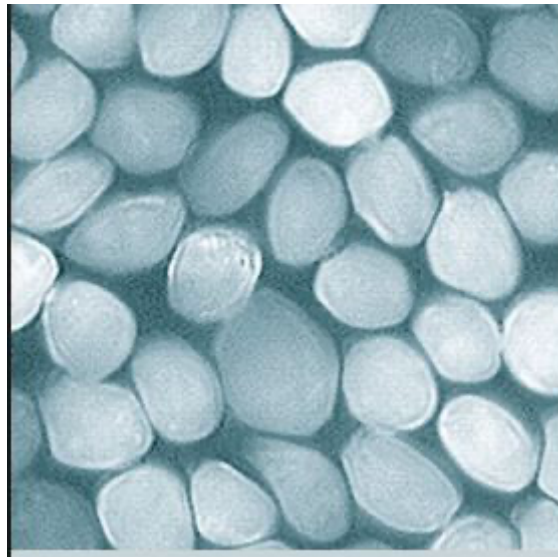
Tencel and viscose are less expensive fibers that have the same shine as real silk. Viscose has been THE silk alternative for many years. Bamboo silk, art silk, etc. are just fancy names for viscose. The disadvantage of viscose is that when the fibers get wet they bunch up, leaving the pile of the rug flattened.

Today, many rugs are being made with TENCEL® instead of viscose. Much like viscose, TENCEL® is made from wood pulp which is then made in to cellulose resulting in beautiful silky looking rugs. Rugs made with TENCEL® are more resilient to water and they last longer than rugs made with viscose.

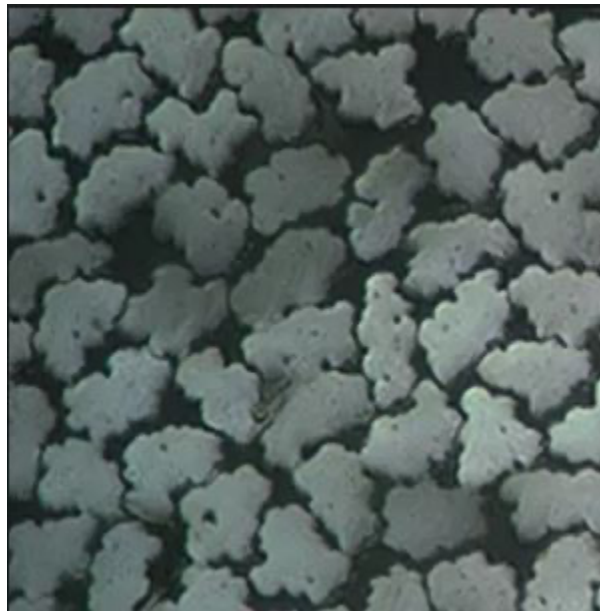
The Details - TENCEL Making Process vs. Viscose Making Process:

During the viscose making process, the cellulose is dissolved in water before strong chemicals, such as carbon disulphide and caustic soda are added to physically alter the chemical structure into alkali cellulose. Through this process, the fibers are formed with random chemical structures. This causes the fibers to be less strong and less uniform

In the TENCEL® making process no chemicals are used to change the cellulose. The physical pulling of the fibers results in long straight chains of molecules which give TENCEL® its final luster and form. The catalysts that are used in the process are refined back out of the water and 98.9% of them can then be reused. This makes TENCEL® very sustainable and one of the most environmentally friendly regenerated fabrics.



TENCEL FIBERS



VISCOSE FIBERS

The above photos show a comparison between the TENCEL® and viscose. The photo on the top shows the uniform shape of TENCEL®. The long cylindrical yarn fibers are made up of long straight chains of molecules, resulting in a stronger and more resilient product. The photo of the viscose fibers, altered by chemicals, are more disjunct and staggered.

So, since TENCEL® is formed by a physical process rather than by a chemical one like viscose, the fibers maintain their integrity much better when wet. TENCEL® will not bunch up and flatten when wet. TENCEL® fibers un-bunch as they dry, allowing the fibers to return to their original form. Viscose fibers can bunch up like papier-mâché when wet completely and they will not totally un-bunch when dry. This causes the pile of the rug to flatten and there may appear to be a spot where the viscose got wet. TENCEL® is also inherently stronger and will wear better over time.

The Bottom Line

Silk is best. Between Tencel and viscose, Tencel is the better choice and well worth the relatively small premium in price. Of course, your budget will also dictate which is the best choice for you.